

NOTES FROM THE *Underground*

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Going in Circles

I thought I would ignore the Virginia Prince what-should-we-call-ourselves-now debate, since I thought no one could possibly take this seriously, but every time I opened up the pages of a crossdressing publication, there was someone arguing for or against the term bigenderist. Well I'm sorry, but I'm having a hard time figuring out the point of all this.

Surely no one believes that calling ourselves "bigenderists" is going to change anything? I think this whole debate just emphasizes how we keep going around in circles. We're so lacking in fresh ideas that we keep recycling the old ones.

Let me see, what have we called ourselves in the last thirty years? Well, first there was fem-mephile, then transvestite, then crossdresser and now, lord help us, bigenderist. Then of course we have all the related but "different" terms like drag queen, she-male, transgenderist and, what the hell, let's throw transsexual in there too since sometimes people will go that way. Have I missed one? Well, never mind. I don't know what half of them mean anyway, although people tell me I'm one of them.

Perhaps some of you have noticed that people have already defined us in their own minds. It comes with all the publicity we've managed to get lately. Consequently, if you walk around calling yourself a "bigenderist", everyone will ask, "What the hell is that?"

"Well," you'll say, "you know, a crossdresser." And there you'll be, back at the beginning again. Of course, you could try avoiding the CD word and launch into an extensive psychological analysis of yourself, but people will eventually understand what you're talking about and say: "Oh! A transvestite! Why didn't you say so?"

This whole debate is so pointless, it's embarrassing. It certainly shows that Virginia Prince's opinion still carries a lot of weight in the community. Virginia Prince has undoubtedly done a lot for crossdressers, but with all due respect, even Gordie Howe doesn't play hockey like he used to.

I can't help but look at the gay community and see how they've reclaimed the hateful term "queer" and thrown it back in the faces of the people who have oppressed them all these years. Meanwhile, we're discussing the minutiae of a completely innocuous term like crossdresser and convincing ourselves that it matters. We're real social activists, aren't we?

I know that not everyone wants to be a social activist and I recognize the irony of my arguing rather vehemently about something I don't believe we should bother arguing about; or that by saying this is

unnecessary, I am in fact supporting the continued use of "crossdresser". However, I have a difficult time ignoring those apparently endless occasions when we lapse into the trivial. Opening up the who-are-we-debate again when many of us know who we are (and those who don't certainly won't get any more insight with yet another term) is simply a waste of energy.

Since putting out January's extended issue of N.F.T.U., I have been having a difficult time shrinking the newsletter back to its more customary size of 8 to 10 pages. I'm pleased, notwithstanding the extra work involved, that so many of you have contributed articles and items to keep this project pumping at peak capacity. Floundering we ain't. So thanks for the material and I apologize if your baby hasn't appeared yet. And please, don't construe this as a plea to stop submissions. I like when we function at peak capacity.

Ted

Notes from the Underground

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Customs Hassles

I just took a short holiday to the States and crossed at the Thousand Islands Bridge in my male clothes. Being the only one in the car, I told the customs officer I was going to a crossdressing convention in the Poconos; not true, but I was testing the waters for my real trip this fall. Well, he did not understand and told me to park my car at bay no. 1 at the customs building and wait for another officer.

I had packed all my lingerie in my suitcase along with skirts, blouses and make up, no male clothes except what I was wearing. I had to open my suitcase and explain why I had only femme clothes. He then took my drivers license and my car keys away and told me to wait in the lounge area of the building. I saw two other guards head for my car; they went through my boots, shoes, purse - everything. About twenty minutes passed and the three officers returned to the desk and gave me my keys, but not my license. After another twenty minutes, my name was called and I was asked to go to another part of the customs office where they asked a million questions about who I was and why I only had female clothes in my car. I told them I was a crossdresser and planning to attend a convention of crossdressers in the Poconos.

During the search they removed a phone number of the CD Network in Rochester and asked why I had it in my possession. I explained again that it was a phone number of the chapter in Rochester for cross-dressers. They took one of our calling cards also. I guess over one hour passed before I was eventually let into the States. After a few days in the U.S., I returned to Canada at Cornwall at 11.45 P.M. en femme and was allowed entry without a blink of an eye.

So dear sisters, be prepared for anything at the border. I wonder if the Rochester CD hotline got a call from the State border police. The next time I will probably cross dressed en femme, as they could

not possibly rake me over the coals more than they did at Thousand Islands.

Joanne L.

Losing Interest In Crossdressing

Recently I contacted the Clark Institute, who cater to cross-dressers. I spoke with Dr. Paul Fedoroff and during our conversation the subject of discontinuing or ceasing crossdressing came up. It was then that I discovered that the Clark Institute is currently conducting a study into and have developed a program to assist those who would be interested in giving up crossdressing. Although I am sure that I will receive a good deal of feedback from other crossdressers for writing this article in our newsletter, I feel that there may be those amongst us who are interested in knowing that this option is available.

I'm given to understand this study is focused more towards transvestites. However, I personally feel that for anyone who is interested in ceasing crossdressing, but feel that they are TS, they may consider investigating the program anyway. Who knows who is considered to be an ideal candidate?

Okay, now that I've said my peace, one may ask if I have entered the program. The answer is yes, I have. It began on April the 7th. How do I feel about it? I must say that I

have my reservations about being able to change. We all know this is a part of us and let's face it, I don't feel like buying ten tons of rocks and gravel for one million dollars. However, I've been given to understand that participants currently in the study have lost interest in crossdressing while at the same time they have increased their heterosexual interests. To me, this seems to indicate the experiment is working.

The one main drawback is that the study is only being carried out at the Clark Institute in Toronto. The participant would be required to attend somewhere between 4-6 sessions over a period of 22 weeks; but because this is an experimental study, the medication is free during that period.

If anyone is interested in knowing more about the study, I'll be happy to fill them in on all the info I have up to this point. Just call Gender Mosaic at (613) 749 5203 and Joanne can put us in touch, or write me at my P.O. Box 24085, Kanata, Ontario K2M 2C3.

Samantha

Welcome

Greetings to new members, Cindy and her boyfriend Jeri, Robin and Bridgette and a long time supporter Sande E.

FACTT NOTES

A Selection of abstracts reported in FACTT Ottawa's newsletter.

Behavioral Differences and Emotional Conflict Among M to F Transsexuals

Archives of Sexual Behavior. January 1976

Salient differences in behavior between two groups of male transsexuals have been studied. Topics investigated are transsexualism and homosexuality, prostitution and deprecation of others. The hypothesis is advanced that those who are leading more stable lives and who are working in gainful employment have developed a stronger self-system which has enabled them to come to terms more effectively with the basic emotional conflict underlying transsexualism than have those who are and have been engaged in homosexuality and prostitution

Navy Blues

The U.S. Supreme Court rejected the appeal of a man thrown out of the Navy for wearing women's clothes while off duty. It said his dismissal was to preserve "good order and discipline in the armed forces."

Crossdressing Judge Wins Discharge

A Federal Court judge dressed in women's underwear while wandering around drunk in a hotel hallway last year was given an absolute discharge. The judge resigned immediately after he was charged last May 9 with committing an indecent act in a public place. He had been staying at the St. John's Holiday Inn when he was spotted by some teenage girls wearing a black bra, panties and nylons, court was told.

His lawyer changed the plea to guilty and told the court the former judge has been diagnosed with chronic alcohol dependence. Further, he has suffered embarrassment which has ended his career as a judge. His lawyer argued that a discharge would allow him to practise law.

Great Lake Toxins Blurring Sexes

Animals living in the Great Lakes basin are starting to exhibit unexpected abnormalities in their sexual functions, including a blurring of male and female reproductive roles, says a report by the International Joint Commission.

The report, citing research on the basin's birds, fish, shellfish and mammals, says there are instances in which males are losing their masculine features and showing signs of feminization. In other cases, females are showing uncharacteristic masculine features.

Substances produced by human activity, such as dioxins, lead and PCBs, are being blamed for the troubling changes. According to the report, the chemicals disrupt the animal's endocrine systems, the glands that produce hormones. Hormones govern animal behaviour, growth and sexual development.

In one of its more disturbing conclusions, the report says contaminant levels in human beings are approaching the same levels that have caused adverse effects in wildlife populations.

An IJC spokeswoman said the alterations in Great Lakes wildlife have been found in cormorants, herring gulls, lake trout, coho salmon, and beluga whales, among other species.

For the birds, researchers found cases of males tending eggs more often than expected and defending eggs more aggressively. Females showed a decline in nesting instincts, said Sally Cole-Misch.

Genitals of some animals were found to have decreased in size. "It's like a neutering of both extremes," she said.

Opinion: Winds of Change or Wishful Thinking?

So, has anyone else been taking notice of the gentle breezes of change? You know, little things like Irma Kurtz's Agony column in Cosmopolitan in which she actually seems to be scolding the young woman whose boyfriend crossdresses because she's not being understanding enough. Or Faith Popcorn, the New York oracle, who predicted that crossdressing would be "hot" in the '90's. Or the article in the December Mirabella which made the observation that everywhere you turn there's some sort of transgender behaviour going on!

In my mind though, the recent Geraldo which focused on crossdressers and the women who love them was of some significance also. Personally, I don't like Geraldo and am tired of seeing crossdressing on talk shows, but the mood seemed noticeably different than usual. Perhaps it was because Geraldo or the producers decided not to invite a psychiatrist this time around. And while it's true that the cameras explored every detail of feminine clothing the crossdressers were wearing as if to show the world just how astounding this all was, and although Geraldo was his usual annoying self, asking a question and then interrupting before the person could answer (God, he's full of himself), the audience was undeniably pleasant and the pervasive mood was positive. It finally seems to be sinking in to people that, after all, it's really no big deal.

Good stuff. Let's keep it up!

Sources:

Journal of Sexual Liberty
Ottawa Citizen
Globe and Mail



Master of Disguise

Man or woman, the chevalier was an extraordinary secret agent. In the annals of international intrigue, there is perhaps no story more bizarre than that of the Chevalier Charles Genevieve Louis Auguste Andre Timothee d'Eon de Beaumont. This very slight product of French petite noblesse, born in 1728, was destined to have the strangest of careers - as a spy for France's King Louis XV, as femme fatale at the imperial Russian court, as courageous soldier, as arch plotter and as thorn in the side of Louis' political enemies.

A perpetrator of ornate conspiracies that contributed to the outbreak of the Seven Years' War and then to its unnecessary prolongation by three years, he was also a key backstage player in negotiating the end of the war and Peace of Paris. The ink on the peace treaty was barely dry when d'Eon was sent to England by his own king to lay the groundwork for an invasion to recoup French losses.

In all, d'Eon had an astonishing impact on European politics. And perhaps most amazing of all was an ambiguity about d'Eon's gender that kept Europe guessing for three decades - and was never really resolved until his death.

D'Eon's early years were spent amid the decadence of Versailles. "Le Petit" d'Eon, as he was known because of his slight stature and delicate features, was nonetheless a ferocious fencer with whom few dared to fight in earnest. He was also a man of considerable literary ability and personal charm.

Behind all the glitter of Louis XV's court was a cauldron of political turmoil, it may also be recalled. The King, sometimes called "un grand timide" could accurately be characterized as satiated, withdrawn and hypersuspicious. Considering the plots and intrigues that beset the court, his fears were only too well justified, although he was as much the cause as he was the victim of this unfortunate fact. Meddling by his mistress, the Marquise de Pompadour, whose political power rivalled his own, and intrigues by a cabal of enemies drove him to desperate measures. He founded a shadow apparatus of trusted partisans called "Le Secret du Roi", headed at first by his cousin, the Prince de Conti, and later by the influential Count de Broglie. The function of this super-secret organization was to place its members in key spots where they could keep the King informed and see that His Majesty's wishes, often at odds with France's avowed policies, were carried out. Le Secret du Roi was also given political action projects so sensitive that they could not be entrusted to foreign office.

D'Eon was tapped by de Conti to be the first member of Le Secret, for a very special mission. He was dispatched to the Russian court at St. Petersburg in the guise of a French lady of fashion, "Mademoiselle Lia de Beaumont", for the purpose of encouraging Russian Empress Elizabeth's pro-French sympathies. The daring disguise, perhaps inspired by d'Eon's convincing appearance when costumed as a woman at the masked balls so popular at the time (or because the all-knowing de Conti was aware of his transvestite inclinations) worked better than anyone had a right to expect.

French diplomatic representatives at the Russian court had been barred since 1744 because of British pressure. It seems that the empress' grand chancellor, Alexis Bestucheff, had been bought off by the British ambassador, at the expense of French influence, although Elizabeth herself still had a warm spot in her heart for King Louis XV. She had, in fact, once been a candidate for his hand in marriage.

The plan was for d'Eon to work his wiles in the guise of reader for the empress and to provide secret communications between her and the French monarch. Mademoiselle Lia was accompanied by an "uncle", the Chevalier Douglas Mackenzie, who in reality was no relation but a Scottish exile in France pretending for purposes of the operation to be a French businessman. While the disguised d'Eon, as an agent of influence, fanned Elizabeth's pro-French sympathies, Mackenzie spied out Russian military and political situations. The fruits of their labours were sent by secret cipher to de Conti for King Louis' eyes only.

D'Eon, it further seems, had explained to Elizabeth his strange "cover" as a woman and had given her a letter from King Louis vouching for the arrangement. But his role was nonetheless difficult, he had to "pass" muster with the Russian court's real ladies-in-waiting, particularly with the Princess d'Askoff, with whom he actually shared an apartment (and who would have been aghast to discover that her modest bedmate was a man!).

The six months d'Eon spent at the Russian court coincided with a difficult time for France. The Russian chancellor and the British ambassador were in the process of drafting the Treaty of St. Petersburg, which called for England to provide 80,000 men to serve under Russian command against France. At the same time, Frederick II ("The Great") of Prussia was preparing to break his alliance with France and reach accord with France's enemy, England. King Louis XV's only hope of mitigating these dangerous liaisons was to appeal to Empress Elizabeth.

This almost impossible task actually seemed within reach, however, when d'Eon gained from Her Majes-

ty a letter inviting Louis to renew diplomatic relations with Russia and send a French ambassador to her court, and so, quickly exit from Russia, the imposter Lia de Beaumont with a diplomatic prize of no little magnitude! And enter Charles d'Eon back at the French court, where a grateful monarch received him with honours. "Le Petit" d'Eon had proved himself a master of the dark arts of espionage and high politics, but his greater glory was yet to come.

Much remained to be done in St. Petersburg if the pro-French Elizabeth were to triumph over her pro-English chancellor, and only d'Eon could do it. Now attired as a gentleman, d'Eon was assigned to the new French ambassador as secretary. He posed as the "brother" of the departed Mlle Lia de Beaumont, the same who had won the friendship of the empress. "Uncle" Mackenzie now shed his businessman role and metamorphoses into ambassador. Thus, the same team in different guise, incredible as it may seem, continued a secret collaboration with the Russian ruler, Empress Elizabeth.

Their crowning achievement was the Treaty of Versailles, signed in May 1763 by France and Austria and soon thereafter by Russia, heralding a complete change of French foreign policy and a realignment of the political alliances in Europe. France was now allied with Austria and Russia, its previous antagonists. Overriding the influence of her chancellor and British ambassador, Elizabeth not only signed the Treaty of Versailles but, thanks in large measure to d'Eon's influence, soon ripped up her treaty with the English and withdrew the 80,000 Russian troops from their command. France could now stand up to England and Frederick II's powerful Prussia, although the foolishness of this policy would manifest itself before the rages of the Seven Years' War had run their course.

In a hair-raising dash for Paris across a war-torn Europe with his diplomatic trophies (and bearing the first news that Austria had already defeated the Prussian force), d'Eon broke his leg in a carriage accident. He once again played the hero when, crippled by pain, he nonetheless reached Versailles without delay to complete his mission. D'Eon's reward was a commission in the King's dragons (cavalry). He now could strut in the uniform of an elite regiment. But he was not yet permitted to indulge himself as a soldier fighting for France on the battlefield, because he was still needed in St. Petersburg.

In the course of the next three years, as the Seven Years' War was being fought, d'Eon served under a new ambassador, le Marquis de l'Hopital, and again he covered himself with glory. His intrigues at court caused the ouster of the anti-French chancellor and foiled a plot to force Elizabeth into premature mediation of peace between England and

France that would deprive Louis of the fruits of victory. Because of d'Eon's skilful diplomacy, Elizabeth remained at war three more years despite appalling casualties, some 200,000 Russian lives.

His job done, d'Eon finally managed to finagle a combat role in the waning days of the Seven Years' War. In his brief military career as a real warrior, rather than master intriguer, he distinguished himself by moving a vital store of ammunition under fire and sustaining wounds while leading a charge against superior enemy forces. Having served in the shadows as agent extraordinaire and member of Le secret, he could now bask openly in the acclaim given him as a brave soldier. This was good for his ego, and helped to dispel whispers about his slightly effeminate ways, small stature and nearly beardless face (lucky him!).

When faltering fortunes of war forced France to seek peace, it was d'Eon, now 34 years old, to whom the king turned for help in obtaining the best terms possible from England. As aide to French envoy le Duc de Nivernais, d'Eon again revealed his innate cunning in such manners. The chevalier ingratiated himself with King George III's consort, Queen Charlotte, sometimes being received most informally at night.

While Nivernais plied his opposite number in the negotiations with doses of wine, d'Eon "borrowed" a briefcase containing England's secret final-bargaining position. This invaluable intelligence made clear that England, if necessary, was willing to relinquish Cuba and allow Spain, France's ally, to have it. Nivernais pressed the helpful negotiating advantage to the utmost; as saviour of Cuba, d'Eon was warmly welcomed by King Louis, who pinned the Cross of the Order of St. Louis on his chest and made him a chevalier.

In the course of his meteoric career, d'Eon's ego kept pace not only with his own progression but also with the determination of his enemies at court to ruin him. Madame de Pompadour's clique, now on the scent of Le Secret du Roi, suspected d'Eon of being one of its members. How else could one explain his arrogance toward people in high places? When the chevalier drew an assignment to the Court of St. James in London as French minister plenipotentiary, jealousy was bound to erupt among his enemies. Had they but known that his secret agenda was to pave the way for a French invasion of England to redress some of France's losses under the terms of the Peace of Paris, their fury would have been even greater. This was King Louis XV's greatest secret, to be protected at all cost, lest its revelation in the wake of the peace treaty lead to a new rupture with England. D'Eon, entrusted with documents from the king authenticating his mission, would communicate with him only through the Count de Broglie, new chief of Le Secret du Roi.

D'Eon also realized that such state secrets, not known even to Louis' ministers, could be vital insurance against powerful enemies in the French government who plotted against him.

Indeed, his trouble began when the Count de Guerchy, one of Madame de Pompadour's partisans, arrived in London as ambassador and peremptorily ordered d'Eon to return to France. The sudden dismissal, not to mention a demand that d'Eon turn over all his documents, was not only humiliating but also placed the plans of Le Secret in grave jeopardy. Even more disconcerting, the king, while feigning indifference to d'Eon's fate, was sending secret messages ordering him not to relinquish his precious letters nor abandon his hidden mission in England.

D'Eon was finally rescued by de Broglie, but not before the beleaguered chevalier was unmercifully harassed by de Guerchy. D'Eon had to endure blackmail schemes, even an attempt on his life, but most hurtful of all, he had to suffer rumours spread by Ambassador de Guerchy that he was "not only a woman, but both a man and a woman", rumours that were to titillate London's society for years to come and pursue d'Eon to the edge of his grave.

D'Eon would get his revenge and prove once more that he was not to be trifled with. He brought charges in court against de Guerchy, accusing him of conspiring to murder. Although the case never came to trial, the accusation, all too true, ruined Guerchy's career. It was said that he died of acute aggravation.

The Chevalier's reputation also had suffered, however, and now adding to his woes was Princess d'Askoff, who had known him as Mlle Lia de Beaumont, her roommate at the St. Petersburg court. Arriving in London, she spread the gossip that the chevalier was in fact a woman. Such juicy morsels with imaginative embellishments reverberated within London's society, even stimulating the gambling establishment to make book on d'Eon's sex.

D'Eon's fortunes disintegrated when Louis XV died. The King's Successor, Louis XVI, disbanded the no-longer-secret Secret du Roi and took steps to retrieve the incriminating papers held by d'Eon. One of France's most accomplished courtiers, Pierre Augustin Caron Beaumarchais, was sent to London to dicker for them with d'Eon, who was not eager to relinquish his insurance policy. Beaumarchais, author of *The Barber of Seville* and *The Marriage of Figaro*, was also a talented royal secret agent who is remembered as the man who engineered French assistance to the colonies during the American Revolution. His solution to the d'Eon affair was worthy of his genius; he arranged "reparations", i.e. pension for life, for d'Eon in exchange for the incriminating papers.

Convinced that d'Eon was, in fact, a woman, he became solicitous, if not enamoured of "her" and convinced Louis XVI that "she" deserved compassion. But he recommended that as part of the bargain, the chevalier must give up his "pretence" of being a man and live henceforward as a woman. This would relieve the royal court of obligations to grant him certain prerogatives due his rank. And so, against his wishes (sure!), Le Chevalier had suddenly become La Chevalire, but nonetheless remained prominent in Paris society. She (for this is how we must now refer to him) was glorified as a new Joan of Arc, and her portrait was once romantically painted as Minerva, Roman goddess of wisdom. While she missed wearing his/her beloved dragoons uniform (sure!), d'Eon was, at least, the centre of attention, something she had always craved.

In her later years, d'Eon moved to England, where for all her notoriety she moved in the best circles, although she also kept some not-so-estimable company as well. She was befriended by the notorious Lord Le Despencer, onetime English chancellor of the exchequer who more darkly was remembered as founder of the mysterious Hell Fire Club, a satanic cult. Through the Hell Fire Club, d'Eon consorted with the likes of Lord Sandwich, London's most famous gambler, who would dearly have loved to discover d'Eon's true sex so he could adjust his betting odds accordingly.

No less a personage than the Prince of Wales patronized Mlle d'Eon and would attend fencing exhibitions in which, burdened by three layers of petticoats, she duelled with England's finest; and inevitably won. But with the French Revolution came ruin. Her pension, for which she had sacrificed a manly image by agreeing to appear forever as a woman, went the way of all royal obligations. In her last years, her debts mounted so high that she was forced to spend five miserable years in a debtor's prison with common criminals.

Toward evening on May 21, 1810, d'Eon died in her homeland, to which she had returned. A priest attending her at the end discovered the astounding fact that "she" was a male whose "organs of generation were perfectly formed in every respect". To end the speculation that had plagued d'Eon's last 33 years of life, she, now "he" once again, was duly inspected by a panel of worthies and a cast taken of the body. The years passed and this remarkable man, whose exploits had given him so much notoriety, would be remembered only for the fact that the famous English psychologist, Havelock Ellis, used his name to coin a new medical term, "eonism", to describe, perhaps unfairly, the plight of the transvestite.

Extracted from the magazine, *MILITARY HISTORY* dated Dec 1991, by John H. Waller.

La Marquise

The Continuing Adventures of Morris

Morris took a deep breath and drove down into the lake. He kept his eyes open because he likes to see where he is going. He reached the sandy bottom and picked up a snail between his teeth. Then he began his ascent to the surface. As he rose higher in the water, Morris could no longer help himself, and he just had to swim parallel to the lake bottom. So what if the others ostracized him. Like a bird soaring above the ground, Morris swam above the lake bottom. "Oh to soar so high in the air like a bird. To feel my feathers in the wind," Morris thought sadly.

But alas, Morris had no feathers. And his heavy green shell did little to enhance his ability to fly. His only solace in his body was that in times where he could not face the world as he was, he could simply withdraw his arms, legs and head and appear to be little more than an oddly shaped green rock. At times like this he would often hear the others make jokes about him as they would pass and he would cry until his shell would fill with tears and his head would come floating embarrassingly out of his shell. When he wasn't crying he would find a private rock in the sun and he would gaze longingly up at the sky and envy all of the birds. Of course Morris referred to them as the Other Birds, since he thought of himself as a being a bird also.

One day Morris heard the others talking about another group of turtles who lived over the valley and down in the swamp several miles away. He thought he'd heard them say they were painted. "Maybe they have feathers too!" Morris wondered excitedly to himself. As it seemed to him that the others did not have a high opinion of any turtle who would be painted, Morris tried to appear disinterested in their conversation, although he kept his ears open to try and learn as much as he could about these painted turtles. "What do you think about a bunch of fruity painted turtles?" someone asked Morris. "Sounds awful to me," he replied.

A few days later Morris found himself alone on his favorite rock. The idea of visiting the painted turtles and finding out if they had feathers had grown to become an obsession. "If I met them and they had feathers, then maybe they could teach me how to fly too," he thought. As he lay basking in the sun, a bird landed on his rock. Although it was hard to tell, owing to his already green shell, Morris was green with envy. He had seen birds flying overhead, but he had never met one personally before.

"So what brings you out here all alone Morris?" Wilbur the bird said. "How do you know my name?" a surprised Morris asked. "I've been watching you for awhile and if you don't mind me as

king, why is it that you are so often looking up at us as we fly around?" replied the bird. Morris turned red with embarrassment for he had never told anyone how he felt. But somehow he trusted Wilbur. Wilbur was a bird. Wilbur would understand much more than another turtle.

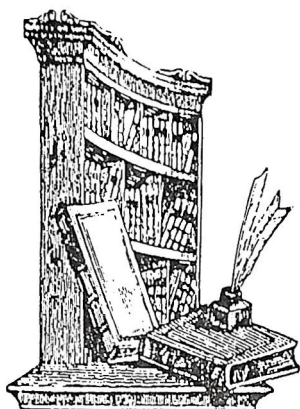
Towards the end of the afternoon, Morris had completed telling his story to Wilbur and they had grown very close as a result. "But why would you want to be a bird Morris? We don't even have any arms, and you have arms. We can't swim to the bottom of the lake, but you can. We birds can't..." But Morris cut Wilbur off. He knew that this was going to take some explaining, especially since he could see that Wilbur took most of the great things about being a bird for granted, and it was a really big surprise to Morris when he realized this.

Morris began to explain how he had felt all his sad life. How he'd been ostracized once when he was just a two inchler for covering his shell with sand in feather like patterns. How ever since he'd just never fit in. How up until today, he'd never told anyone about his dreams of flying, building nests and pecking about for worms. "Have you ever tasted a worm?" Wilbur asked him skeptically. "They're not very tasty, you know." "Well, no," Wilbur replied, "But I'm pretty sure I'd like them if I was a bird. After all, it would be different then, wouldn't it? I'd be a bird." Wilbur took a few steps around the rock, bobbing his head with every step and considering what he'd heard. "It sounds awfully confusing," he said. "But I guess I could learn to understand how you feel."

Morris told Wilbur about the painted turtles he'd heard about and asked him if he could help him find them. "Sure," said Wilbur. "I can fly reconnaissance and lead you to them. Maybe they could help you somehow." Morris was ecstatic. "Could you teach me how to bob my head up and down just like you do when you walk?" he begged Wilbur. "Well, since I'm not sure yet how I'm going to teach you how to fly, I guess getting the walk down would be a big start," Wilbur answered.

Morris chose an unused path in the general direction of the painted turtles and the two newly acquainted friends headed off in that direction. The adventure had begun.

Sharon



BOOKS

Gender : An Ethno-methodological Approach. by Suzanne Kessler and Wendy McKenna.

Virginia Woolf once said: "When a subject is highly controversial, and any question about sex is that, one cannot hope to tell the truth. One can only show how one came to hold whatever opinion one does hold."

It is no accident that two women, Suzanne Kessler and Wendy McKenna, could undertake a sociological study of gender and reveal the dynamics of gender in our society. The literature by men is usually strident, judgemental and almost hysterical when addressing issues of social deviance. Women and other minorities are so accustomed to being outsiders that we have a unique perspective: because we are not part of the power structure, we can see how it operates and why we are outsiders.

Kessler and McKenna's book is probably the best available on the subject of gender as social construct. With six chapters, a bibliography, author index and subject index, it is only 233 pages long. Chapter Five deals with Gender Construction in Everyday Life: Transsexualism, while Chapter Six is titled Toward a

Theory of Gender. These two sections contain the most substantial and significant matters.

But first, some basic definitions: sex designates the biological components, while gender refers to the amount of masculinity or femininity in a person. Secondly, gender assignment is the special gender attribution which is done at birth. Thirdly, gender identity is the self attribution a person makes: the self image which is usually independent of gender attributions made by others. Finally, gender role is a sociological term referring to the set of expectations about what behaviours are appropriate for people of one gender. This can now be put into context to describe social interactions. There is an overwhelming imperative (instinct?) to categorize people as male or female. This is done almost instinctively and automatically by most people through a process called gender attribution, and once such an attribution is made, it is difficult for the same person to reset the mechanism. This is why people feel so uneasy when they realize they have misidentified a person's gender. It shakes up their faith in their judgement and makes them think about something of which they are barely aware.

More definitions: a transsexual is an individual whose gender identity and gender assignment are in conflict. When the gender of the individual's dress is in conflict with both gender assignment and gender role, then that can be referred to as transvestism. People will categorize a person as a transvestite only after the primary gender attribution has been made, and then consider the secondary issues (i.e. clothes) to arrive at the category "cross-dresser". Therefore, in order to "pass", it is necessary to address the issue of gender attribution made by others to influence them to make the appropriate choice in your favour.

Passing does not refer to a process of deception, but rather a process of displaying. It would not be an exaggeration to suggest that every person engages in passing for the gender they wish to be attributed

with: by displaying appropriate cues others will respond by making appropriate gender attributions. If a person is not aware of what they are displaying, they can get into some difficult spots. In order for gender to be perceived as natural, it must not be seen as passing or manipulating cues. Everyone displays her or his gender in every interaction. What is displayed is filtered by others through the primary gender attribution already made prior to the interaction. For example, if a feminine gender attribution is made, then subsequent interactions will try to fit any further information into the expected feminine gender. Therefore, the woman who has a husky voice is still considered a woman because the first impression is difficult to reform. If other cues reinforce the feminine gender, then the display is succeeding, but if cues continue to strain credibility, then the gender attribution has been reactivated. In other words, once you reach first base, you're in the game, but if you deviate from the baseline you will be called out. The nice thing about reaching first base is that others will get you there if you let them play out the gender attribution. And you can continue as long as you don't remind them that they are doing all the work. This can be done by maintaining your composure, displaying "naturalness", or lack of concern with gender (after all, others are working at this for you - and they don't even know they are doing this for you.) The key to being accepted by others is to accept yourself. When you realize that passing is not totally your responsibility, that others are working at it too, then confidence can be increased. But, to some degree you must manage to keep your gender from being problematic for other people or else the "set" will break.

People have a "sexual" set in their observation of others. There is a compelling biological reason to identify the sex of another person: from a Darwinian perspective a male is a greater potential source of harm than a female. Therefore, the mind-set is to seek for male cues in order to flag potential sources of trouble.

Consequently, human beings categorize other beings as male or non-male, and most people equate non-male with female. This theory has practical applications. The presence of a male cue may be a sign of maleness, but the presence of a female cue by itself is not necessarily a sign of femaleness: it is easier to pass as a male than a female. The only sign of femaleness is an absence of male cues. Kessler and McKenna's studies explained a common stereotype: in changing a male to a female many people feel that the removal of the penis is the crucial stage, while scarcely anyone mentions that a construction of a vagina is crucial to effect a change. In research with children and adults it is apparent that people equate maleness with penis to such an extent that even a feminine doll with a penis is still considered a male, and even a masculine doll without a penis is still considered male: people insist on seeing "male" if there are any cues suggesting maleness, while "female" is attributed only when there are no male cues. "Maleness" is the default mode.

Fortunately we don't parade about nude all the time, so gender attribution based on penis or no-penis is academically interesting but not a day-to-day or moment-to-moment issue. Other social markers are involved in gender attribution in common social interactions. The gender attribution process is an interaction between displayer and attributor, but concrete displays are not informative unless interpreted in light of the rules which the attributor has for deciding what it means to be female or male. People can describe or recognize typical and atypical gender displays, but if a display can be characterized as typical or atypical, then the gender of the person who is displaying has already been attributed: people are sorted into one of two gender categories as a *first* step. People also have a basic trust that events are what they appear to be. A person is only seen as female if they can not be seen as male: it is easier to pass as a man than as a woman.

Gender attribution is such an ingrained process that a person will be seen as "crazy" long before being seen as being of the other gender. Such social prejudice can be useful: in order to pass, focus on creating a decisive first impression, and then stop worrying about being perfect (in order to cultivate naturalness). It is information applied by others which maintains the gender attribution, not the intrinsic quality of our gender.

This ingrained process also colours supposedly objective studies. Scientific knowledge does not inform the answer to "What makes a person either a man or a woman?" Rather it justifies and appears to give grounds for the already existing knowledge that a person is either a woman or a man, and that there is no problem in differentiating between the two. It is not that biological, psychological and social

differences lead us to see two genders. We see two genders and consequently "discover" the biological, psychological and social differences to justify the prejudice and stereotypes. It is for this reason that he can be aggressive while she is bitchy, he is assertive but she is pushy, he is eloquent but she is wordy, he is immersed in his work but she is selfish and self-centred etc., etc. The social construction of gender revealed through the gender attribution process creates and sustains androcentric reality even though sex and gender are on a continuum. Such "hard-wiring" of perspective results in inability to see people as individuals, and even distorts theological concepts so that God is presumed to be a male. Even the soul "must" have a sex and gender. There "must" be a hierarchy with a dominant male at the top.

This then seems to be the way people judge others: categorize a person as a man if maleness is detected, otherwise consider the person a woman. After this attribution is made, fit any further cues under the initial category even if this strains credibility. The individual's self-image does not play a major role in social interactions, rather, the individual's mannerisms and displays (including appearance) is assessed by others and they will then exhibit mannerisms and displays which they feel is the appropriate response. Play by the rules and you'll be safe, but if you break the rules you may make yourself a target.

I would encourage people to read Kessler and McKenna's book in order not only to learn the rules and how they have developed, but also to acquire some interesting perspectives on the entire subject of sex and gender.

Karen Hope

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Gender Mosaic Info

Library Holdings

Here is an incomplete list of holdings in the Gender Mosaic library. Please return books and magazines so that we can complete cataloguing everything we own.

Serials

En Femme No. 8-12, 14-17
 En Femme Comics
 Transvestian V. 6, N. 12; V. 7, N. 2, 4.
 Female Mimics International V. 6, N. 2; V. 13, N. 4; V. 14, N. 2.
 Lady Like 3
 Transvestite Transformed V. 1, N. 2, 3.
 Tapestry 51, 52, 56 (ongoing)
 Feminine V. 1, N. 1, 4.
 Tri-Ess Directory 1987, 1989
 TV TS Talk
 Tri-Ess Buyers Guide (2)
 Journal of Sexual Liberty
 1991 Crossdressers Resource and Survival Guide (Canada)
 TV guys/gyde
 Transister V. 1, N. 8, 9.
 Guys in Drag V. 1, N. 3.
 Club International May 1982
 Femme Mirror V. 2, N. 6; V. 3, N. 1-6; V. 4, N. 2, 4, 5; V. 5, N. 1-5; V. 6, N. 1-5, V. 7, N. 1; 1986 2-4; 1987 1, 2; 1988 1; 1989 1-3; 1990 1.
 Transvestia 59 60-62 69 73-75 77 78 80 82-84 86 87 90 91 93-103
 Our Sorority 17 22 23
 Fantasy Fair 1983 1984 1986
 Notes from the Underground (all issues)
 Monarch Newsletters
 Toronto/Canadian Crossdressing Club
 Transcare (New Zealand)
 Newsletters from US Clubs (black binder)
 Illusions Social Club
 Garter Press, Montreal
 T.A.M. Montreal

Fantasy

Skirted Men
 Men in Skirts (2)
 Transvestite Date
 Diary of a Transvestite
 Ideal Marriage Parts 1-3
 Days of Future Passing

Photography

Transformations by Mariette Pathy Allen
 American Photographer June 1987

Fashion

The Naughty Look (scarves)
 Tall and Terrific
 Teenage Beauty
 Looking Beautiful

Art & Illusion by Joanne Roberts (2)
 Make Up by Rex
 Fashion Coloring Book
 La Beaute (French)
 Assorted Lingerie, Wigs, Clothes Catalogues

Books

Rita (Novel)
 Understanding Crossdressing
 Reinventing Womanhood
 COPING WITH CROSSDRESSING
 MY HUSBAND WEARS MY CLOTHES

Audio/Video

Perfecting Femininity (VHS)
 Joanne Goes to College (audio)
 Outreach Institute (audio)

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WORKING GIRLS' LIVING EXPENSES

Can a Business Woman Secure
Board and Clothing for Less
Than \$300 a Year?

LET THE GIRLS ANSWER

This story ran Feb. 12, 1910.

What does it cost for a young woman to live in Toronto, allowing for good board, comfortable room, proper clothing and a small sum for incidentals?

In reply to the above question The Star has received a number of letters from business girls who are in active work and who therefore speak from experience. The following is one of the replies:

Editor of The Star:

"Before I can present the neat appearance desired by my employer and in keeping with my self-respect, I need the articles mentioned in the following list which you will find enclosed. It covers my needs for six winter months. In this list I have chosen articles of good quality, being cheaper in the end than those secured at a bargain counter. Indeed, I have no time to get these, anyway:

A Girl's Outfit.

Winter overcoat.....	\$12.50
Two dress skirts.....	10.00
Three underskirts.....	6.00
Six blouses at \$1.50.....	9.00
Gloves, two pairs.....	2.00
Four white underwaists.....	1.00
Three sets winter underwear.....	4.50
Corsets.....	1.75
Six pairs stockings.....	2.00
Boots, laces, and rubbers.....	4.75
Umbrella.....	1.50
Collars and belt.....	1.00
Handkerchiefs.....	1.00
Toilet articles.....	1.00
Umbrella.....	1.50
Laundry, at 50c a week.....	13.00
Car fare, 25c a week.....	6.50
Dentist.....	5.00
Doctor.....	2.00
Board, at \$3.50 a week.....	91.00
Collection, 15c per Sunday.....	3.90
A raincoat.....	5.00
Set of furs.....	25.00

\$210.90

"The above does not include anything for stationery and postage, nor books and amusements, nor gifts at Christmas time, nor a Christmas vacation, particularly if one's parents reside in another city or town, all of which things every self-respecting girl should be entitled to indulge in. Nor is any provision made for illness or lack of employment. I mention six pairs of stockings, as a girl may get her feet wet from damp skirts, even though she wears rubbers, and she may not always have time to mend a pair just when they are required. I pay \$1.50 for blouses, as I find the cheaper ones will not stand the laundry and I cannot wash them myself after a day's work. Furs and a raincoat are also articles I



consider a properly dressed girl should wear when the weather demands them."

A Wage Earner

Another List

Board for 48 weeks.....	\$144.00
Wardrobe.....	71.00
Church fees.....	20.00
Lodge fees.....	10.56
Optician.....	5.00
Doctor's bill.....	5.50
Christmas gifts.....	5.00
Traveling expenses, car fare and other incidental expenses.....	25.44
One year's salary.....	\$286.50
Balance.....	300.00
	\$13.50

"N.B. — I made my own dresses and did my own laundry work."

The Star would like to hear from the business girls of Toronto on just what it costs them to live. What should a properly cared-for girl have and wear, and what does it cost?

The Way We Were: 1910

Extracted from the Toronto Star, March 1992

GIRL CAN LIVE ON \$6 A WEEK

This response ran Feb. 21.

The following interesting letter, telling how a business girl lived on \$6 per week, has been received:

"Coming to the city three years ago last autumn, I was employed as stenographer in the office of a large manufacturing house. Hours 8.30 a.m. to 6 p.m., with no Saturday afternoons off, either.

"Boarded in Y.W.C.A. in room with two others, until I could save up for a few necessities hoping soon to go down in bathroom flat with a friend, as with three in a room, it is so hard to be alone a minute for thought or rest.

"But saving up for the few necessities was not so easy. Although we had the privilege of washing, we found it hard to do much in an evening after working till six, getting home, dinner, and prayers over, it was near 7.30, regulation bedtime 10.30. We had to wait our turns for the tubs, and irons, so I found it necessary to send the starched clothes to a laundry, then my weekly account read something like this:

Laundry — 2 blouses, collars, etc..... 50
Riding to and from work if weather was disagreeable..... 50

Lunches downtown.....	1.00
Room and two meals at house.....	2.50
Sundries — toilet, laundry and church.....	.50
	\$5.00

"One dollar remained for the wardrobe for gloves, shoes, rubbers and a winter suit. For a ten-dollar suit it meant saving the dollar for ten weeks. Rainy weather came, requiring shoes, \$1.98; rubbers, 50c, and umbrella, \$1.25, which means nearly four weeks longer to wait for a \$10 suit; so decided to walk more, wash more, eat less for lunch, or pay \$3 at house and carry my lunch from there. I strived away and before Christmas I owned the much needed suit, and enough left over to get a ticket out of the city to the dear old home for Christmas dinner.

"Why do we do it? It may not be necessary for all of the stenographers to go to business, but it is for the greater number, and we have ambitions which in most cases are never accomplished. We have brothers and sisters to be educated, who may need our help, and why should we not be independent?"

Yours sincerely,

BUSINESS GIRL